

CALFED
BAY-DELTA
PROGRAM

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October 21, 1997

The Honorable Maurice Johannessen
Member of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 5061
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Johannessen:

This is in response to your letters of September 25, 1997 and October 7, 1997, and our conversation of October 14, 1997, regarding the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, with particular emphasis on the Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan (ERPP).

I regret that some of your constituents believe they are being excluded from commenting on the ERPP. This is certainly not our intent, and we are acting to correct this situation. Perhaps a fuller explanation of our public outreach activities will help clarify matters.

CALFED has made a significant effort to involve all parties interested in our activities. Our mailing lists currently include about 3,700 names of interested individuals or organizations, and these lists grow as more individuals and organizations ask for information. We mail notices of seven different types of meetings -- usually conducted monthly -- to these individuals and organizations. In the past six months, since April, we have conducted about 22 meetings in the Sacramento Valley on a wide range of topics. I have attached a list of these meetings for your review.

For the ERPP, in June we forwarded a letter to interested parties announcing the availability of the ERPP and asking those interested parties who wished to review the document to request copies of the volumes of interest to them. We followed this approach because the document is large (it is a three-volume document, with an executive summary) and expensive to produce. We forwarded this letter to about 1,100 individuals and organizations statewide. We also forwarded this letter to many of the government organizations that have responsibilities for activities that affect the ERPP area. Many of these individuals requested copies of the ERPP; many others did not.

CALFED Agencies

California

The Resources Agency
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Water Resources
California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board

Federal

Environmental Protection Agency
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Reclamation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service

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In addition to this letter to interested parties, in July we issued a statewide news release announcing the availability of the ERPP. This release went to the Chico *Enterprise-Record*, the Marysville *Appeal-Democrat*, the Red Bluff *Daily News*, and the Vacaville *Reporter*, as well as the larger daily newspapers. Further, we visited several organizations to discuss the ERPP. These visits included an August 7 meeting in Willows with the Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority; a September 6 meeting in Orland with Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority; a September 16 CALFED public meeting in Redding; a September 22 meeting in Orland with local interests and landowners, sponsored by the Farm Bureau; and a September 30 public meeting in Anderson with the Tehama Resource Conservation District. Some of the individuals attending these meetings requested copies of the ERPP, and we have forwarded copies to them. As a result of our outreach efforts, by October 1 we had forwarded 539 copies of the ERPP to interested individuals, statewide, including about 88 in the Sacramento Valley.

Even so, as I indicated on October 14, I agree that more must be done. Along those lines, we have planned additional meetings with parties interested in the ERPP. These will be both broad based public meetings and focused meetings with specific groups. Future meetings already scheduled include the Yolo County Board of Supervisors on October 24, the Yolo County Water Agency on November 3, a CALFED public meeting in Red Bluff on November 6, and a special meeting of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors on November 25, which includes a wide variety of invited agencies. On December 9, in Chico, we will hold a CALFED public meeting on the entire Bay-Delta program, including the ERPP. We are attempting to schedule another broad public meeting and series of focused meetings (e.g., with conservancies, landowner groups, etc.). We will forward specific information on time and location of these meetings, once finalized. Further, any individual who would like to host or participate in a discussion on the ERPP may contact Mr. Dick Daniel at our address or at (916) 657-2666. We are also forwarding copies of the ERPP to public libraries around the state for public availability.

Regarding the individuals who have submitted petitions to your office, we are including their names in our ERPP mailing list and sending copies or request forms to them. We are also forwarding them a copy of our Interested Parties letter of September 30, 1997, explaining that the October 14, 1997, response date is not a legal deadline and that we will solicit and respond to comments on the ERPP that we receive through the comment period for the draft programmatic environmental impact report/environmental impact statement. The ERPP forms a basis for the draft EIR/EIS, which we intend to release in January 1998. Public comments will be received through the late winter or early spring of 1998; we have not yet settled on a date for submission of public comments on the draft EIR/EIS.

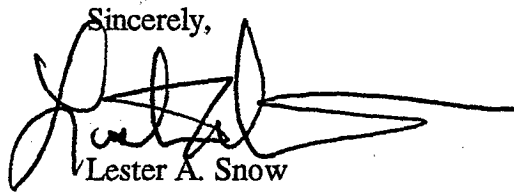
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Your letters raise additional concerns. You note that during local hearings, knowledgeable individuals observed ambiguities or questionable information in the ERPP. We would like to point out that these observations, when tied to specific portions of the ERPP, are precisely the type of comment that we are soliciting. The ERPP includes a wide variety of objectives, targets, and programmatic actions derived from a variety of sources. We are aware that some of the objectives and targets will require additional evaluation to determine if they are feasible. Individuals who live and work in the ERPP geographic area often have the best information on current and historic ecological conditions. Their comments are extremely valuable to the preparation of the draft and final programmatic EIR/EIS.

Their comments will also be important when implementation begins. You may be aware that the EIR/EIS we are working on is a programmatic document. Local organizations, such as resource conservancies, will make the actual, on-the-ground decisions regarding implementation of specific programs consistent with the recommendations in the programmatic EIR/EIS. Local implementation of these projects will require preparation and public review of project-specific EIR/EIS documents. Therefore, now is the appropriate time for local interests to become engaged in review of the programmatic documents associated with the Bay-Delta program, such as the ERPP.

Additionally, you note that many individuals are concerned that the ERPP is not available. I can assure you that it is available. There may be times when it is temporarily out of print, but copies are forwarded to interested parties as soon as supplies are available, and supplies are now available.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you that we are making efforts to involve as wide a segment of California's population in the CALFED process as possible. These efforts certainly include constituents in your district.

Sincerely,

Lester A. Snow
Executive Director

Enclosure

cc: (See attached list.)

The Honorable Pete Wilson
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Douglas Wheeler
Secretary for Resources
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Pombo
Member of the House of Representatives
2495 March Lane, Suite 104
Stockton, CA 95207

The Honorable John Doolittle
Member of the House of Representatives
2130 Professional Drive, Suite 190
Roseville, CA 95661